

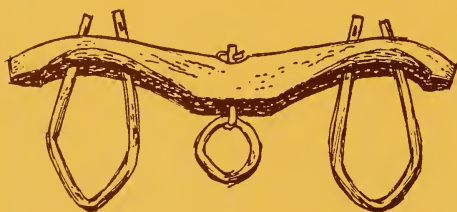
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Brown University

The McLellan Lincoln collection

LINCOLN ROOM

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
LIBRARY



MEMORIAL

the Class of 1901

founded by

HARLAN HOYT HORNER

and

HENRIETTA CALHOUN HORNER

*The McLellan Lincoln Collection
at Brown University*



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THE McLELLAN LINCOLN ROOMS
AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

THE MCLELLAN LINCOLN
COLLECTION

AT BROWN UNIVERSITY

A SKETCH

By
ESTHER COWLES CUSHMAN
Custodian

PROVIDENCE
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1928

REPRINTED WITH SOME CHANGES
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*The McLellan Lincoln Collection
at Brown University*

In the John Hay Library of Brown University is one of the world's greatest collections of Lincolniana. It occupies two rooms, which have been specially fitted up for its accommodation; it has its own trained custodian; and, while it welcomes the casual visitor, it has been built up and is administered for the benefit of serious students of the life, character and work of Abraham Lincoln.

Charles Woodbury McLellan, the originator of the Collection, was born in Beverly, Mass., in 1836. At the age of twenty he went to Springfield, Ill., where he was four years in a bank, and made Lincoln's acquaintance. Many years later he noticed Herndon's life of Lincoln in a bookstore, and, as he had known both men, he bought and read it. This led him to begin collecting lives of Lincoln. When the first bibliography by Judge Fish was issued in 1900, he began trying to get all the items there listed. Once started on collecting Lincolniana, he could find no place to stop; and when he retired from business at the age of seventy, he devoted his remaining twelve years to the care of his estate in Champlain, N. Y., and to his

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Lincoln Collection. His son Hugh took a great interest in the collection, and during the later years did as much as his father in its development.

At this time Mr. McLellan was one of five friendly rivals who helped one another in forming their five great Lincoln collections. Of these Major Lambert died first, leaving instructions in his will that his collection should be sold at public auction, to give other collectors a chance to obtain his treasures. The sale took place in 1914, and a number of the books and pamphlets at Brown bear the note: "Bought at the Lambert sale." The collection of another of the five, Judd Stewart, was bought by Henry E. Huntington, and is now in his great library at San Gabriel, Cal. A third, that of Judge Fish of Minneapolis, is still in the possession of his family. The fourth collection was made by Mr. Joseph B. Oakleaf, of Moline, Ill., the only one of the five still living. He has recently published a bibliography giving titles additional to those noted by Fish. The fifth, the McLellan Collection, was bought in 1923 by Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr., and placed in the John Hay Library at Brown University.

Many examples of the friendship existing between these collectors are found in the collection at Brown. A rare life of Lincoln in Greek has belonged to three of them. On the first leaf is a note by Mr. McLellan:

"Lot 412 Lambert sale." Inserted opposite is the following letter to Major Lambert, dated Dec. 30, 1910. "Dear Major:—I am sending you to-day, so that you may cross off the item during this year, a copy of the Greek life. I hope that you receive it tomorrow, and as to reimbursing me for it, be assured that the pleasure I will have from knowing that whenever you show this volume you will have to pay a tribute to your hated rival's ability will more than offset its price, and besides I feel that I am so indebted to you that it is only proper that you accept it with my best compliments. Yours very truly, Judd Stewart." Mr. Stewart had a number of books privately printed. These he apparently sent to the others, as the Brown collection has many inscribed on the fly leaf, "Chas. W. McLellan, Compliments of Judd Stewart." In a volume of Lincoln addresses before the Minnesota commandery of the Loyal Legion, and in several other books, appears the inscription: "Compliments of Daniel Fish." Mr. Oakleaf has published several addresses, and these were sent with his regards; as were also those published by Major Lambert. After the Fish bibliography was published in 1906 the five collectors pooled all their findings and Judge Fish sent to each, from time to time, typewritten copies of all new titles. This supplement was incorporated into the Oakleaf bibliography in 1925.

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When Mr. John D. Rockefeller, Jr. decided that the building erected as a memorial to Lincoln's private secretary, John Hay, ought to have a Lincoln collection, and placed the McLellan Collection here, he had a room specially fitted up for it. Later he made provision for adding to it, and he has recently had a second room fitted up to take care of its growth. It now consists of notable collections along several lines, making it as a whole perhaps the greatest single Lincoln collection extant, rivaling or even surpassing that in the Library of Congress. In the field of books and pamphlets it contains nearly all the items listed in the bibliographies, as well as some unlisted and much supplementary material. In manuscripts it ranks high, containing over 650 letters, notes, legal cases, etc., all in Lincoln's handwriting. The portrait collection is very large, and contains some unique pieces. The medal collection is the third largest in existence, and the largest in a public institution. Among the pieces of sheet music are found nearly all that are known. There are many broadsides, including rarities old and new.

Among the treasures of the McLellan Collection are some books not possessed by its rivals. One of these is the resolutions passed by the Belgian chamber of representatives on the death of Lincoln, published separately as "*Extrait du compte rendu de la séance*

du 29 avril 1865." Another is a tiny four-page pamphlet, 4x7 cm., "Life of Abe Lincoln, of Illinois, 1860. Printed for the Publishers." It is written in a humorous vein, making fun of the homely rail-splitter. Two very rare pamphlets are the little life by John Locke Scripps, one published as Tribune tract, no. 6, by the New York Tribune, the other by the Chicago Tribune. Another rare item is one of the twenty-five copies printed of the oration on the death of Lincoln by William Binney, Esq., Providence, 1865.

With a book may sometimes be found correspondence relating to the obtaining of that particular volume. Mr. McLellan was searching for a sermon on the death of Lincoln preached by Rev. William W. Hicks, in Frederick City, Md. He had written to an acquaintance in that city who replied that he had tried time and again to locate a copy, without success, until finally, during repairs to the church in 1911, the cornerstone was opened, and there a copy was found. This he hoped to obtain. A note in Mr. McLellan's handwriting states "Gave \$25.00 to the church for this." There is an address on Lincoln by Henry Fargues, formerly a pastor of the Swiss and French church in Philadelphia. Before 1904 this was known to bibliographers only through the catalogue of the British Museum. Mr. McLellan in some way learned the author's address and wrote to him. He received

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an answer, dated Oct. 20, 1904, from his son, a physician in Nantes, France. Dr. Fargues sent a copy of the rare pamphlet, a photograph of his father who had recently died, and a manuscript account, written by his father in French, of his impressions of Lincoln whom he had seen in Philadelphia in 1861 on his way to Washington.

Another group of books has been rendered unique by extra-illustration. One of them, the Nicolay and Hay life of Lincoln in ten volumes, has been enlarged by inserting many portraits of people mentioned and letters written by them. This set it is, of course impossible to duplicate. The life of Lincoln by Miss Tarbell in two volumes, large paper, has been treated in the same way, and it was found that the four notes by Lincoln himself that were inserted, had not been published. Another little book, "The Picture and the Men", which describes Carpenter's painting of Lincoln and his cabinet, has been inlaid in much larger leaves, illustrated with many portraits of people mentioned, and bound in morocco to make an impressive book many times the size of the original. A recent addition is the life of Lincoln by Dr. William E. Barton with illustrations added by Goodspeed of Boston to make four volumes, which have been beautifully bound by Sangorski and Sutcliffe of London.

The Collection is very rich in poetry on Lincoln,—

poems published separately, both books and single sheets, as well as collections containing a poem or two on Lincoln not published elsewhere. One especial treasure is a signed copy, in Lowell's own handwriting, of the stanza on Lincoln in his Commemoration Ode. The ode itself is represented by a first edition inscribed and presented by Lowell to Edward Everett Hale. There is also a copy of "The Victorious", a poem written by M. B. Bird after Lincoln's assassination, and published at Kingston, Jamaica, in 1866. The McLellan Collection, supplemented by the Harris Collection of American Poetry, under the same roof, probably contains the largest number of poems on Lincoln assembled in any one place.

The most interesting of the later publications on Lincoln are those that employ some phase of Lincoln's character to emphasize a lesson which the writer is seeking to impart. This aspect of Lincoln homage, though sometimes fantastic, serves to illustrate the many-sided greatness of the man. One curious fact is noticeable: both sides in many controversies use him to support their arguments: "wets" and "drys," atheists and Christians, Democrats and Republicans.

In addition to these slighter works, are new biographies, such as that by Carl Sandburg. Also careful studies, such as the little book, "Lincoln in 1858", by Paul Angle, secretary of the Lincoln Cen-

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tennial Association of Springfield, Ill., "Abraham Lincoln in Peoria", by B. C. Bryner, and "Personal recollections of Abraham Lincoln", by R. W. McBride, all published in 1926. Dr. Barton's "A Beautiful Blunder" sums up his painstaking work on the history of the much discussed letter to Mrs. Lydia Bixby. One of the latest selections from Lincoln's works is that edited by N. W. Stephenson and published by Scribner. Mr. Stephenson has also recently brought out a different sort of book, which he calls "The Autobiography of Abraham Lincoln". In it he has compiled an account of Lincoln's life as told in selections from his own writings. In the field of fiction dealing with Lincoln, Mrs. Morrow's "Forever Free" is a recent example, and is written with knowledge and literary skill.

A life of Lincoln has often been translated into several foreign languages. The life by Thayer is found in the McLellan Collection in five different translations, including Hawaiian and Modern Greek. Some of the addresses of Emanuel Hertz have been translated into at least twelve foreign languages, to the end, as he writes, "that some day on February 12th of each succeeding year the life and the achievements of Abraham Lincoln may be featured in every daily and weekly newspaper throughout the civilized world". Of late foreign authors have been writing about

Lincoln in their own languages. A life in Icelandic by Bjarni Jonsson is in the collection. Another in German, by Dr. Monteglas is the first life written by a German author. In this connection should be mentioned also Lord Charnwood's Abraham Lincoln, in which, as the Nation said, the author "has given us not only the portrait but the philosophy of the greatest of Americans".

In the portrait division is to be found a great variety, from early prints, showing Lincoln without a beard, to recent halftones and etchings. Mr. McLellan had an excellent collection of engravings largely published during Lincoln's lifetime or soon after his death. Since the Collection came to Brown a number of etchings mostly made during the last twenty years, as well as other engravings, have been added. Recently the Collection acquired the Lincoln portraits gathered by Mr. Warren C. Crane of New York City. He had the advantage over Mr. McLellan in that he began collecting during Lincoln's lifetime. For many years he has been a connoisseur of engravings, and has searched the shops of both this country and Europe. One of his finds abroad is an old German colored lithograph published about 1861, showing Abraham Lincoln as President of the United States and Jefferson Davis as President of the Confederate States. This Mr. Crane has never seen in any other collection.

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The McLellan Collection was rich in examples of engravings in several states. The Crane Collection added some unique copies in this field. When the library of J. C. Buttrey, who engraved portraits of most of the famous people of his time, was sold after his death, Mr. Crane obtained a portfolio containing the only print made from the early state of many of his engravings. These portraits of Lincoln and other Civil War notables came to us. They are often finer than the finished engravings, showing a quality of expression that is sometimes obscured in the later states.

Noteworthy among the portraits is a negative made by Gardner, August 9, 1862. In his diary John Hay wrote under that date: "This being Sunday and a fine day I went down with the President to have his picture taken at Gardner's. He was in very good spirits." The picture reflects this mood. It is very clear, an enlargement bringing out the lines in Lincoln's face and showing the name of the newspaper in his hand, *The Sunday Morning Chronicle*.

One unique treasure in the collection is the statuette made by Truman H. Bartlett as a portrait study of Lincoln. This was exhibited in Paris at the salon of 1877. No cast of it is known. In this sketch, as he calls it, the sculptor gives us the Lincoln of slender bones but powerful muscles, standing firmly on both feet. This agrees with the description of careful

observers. The surgeon who examined him after he was shot said that he had rarely seen a body so perfectly proportioned. There are a number of other small statues and busts in the collection, among them the Rogers group, "The Council of War", and two recent full length statuettes by Cyrus Dallin.

The manuscript division is of surpassing richness. In the original McLellan Collection the earliest document was a certificate of purchase of land in Kentucky by Lincoln's grandfather of the same name, who was shot by an Indian. This is dated May 29, 1780. Next in date is a leaf from Lincoln's copybook made when he was seventeen. Next is one of the rare original surveys, made by Lincoln. It is dated March 10, 1835. At that time he had been working as a surveyor a little over a year. Then from 1838 on, with the exception of a single year, there is something for every year of his life. Among the early examples are several legal cases. The earliest, dated 1838, is of particular interest in that Stephen A. Douglas was the opposing attorney. A very fine letter, written before he was president, is that to Henry L. Pierce and others concerning the principles of Jefferson. In it he likens the two political parties to two drunken men who were fighting. In the end each had fought himself out of his own greatcoat and into that of the other man. Another letter in 1862 to Lady Villiers could not be

improved by the most polished courtier. It reads as follows: "Mr. Lyon has informed me that Lady Villiers has expressed a wish for my autograph. I beg that her Ladyship accept the assurance of my sincere gratification at this opportunity of subscribing myself, Very truly, Her Ladyship's obedient servant, A. Lincoln."

One very important document is a contract made between Lincoln and Theodore Canisius, the publisher of a German newspaper in Springfield. The document begins:—"This instrument witnesseth that the Printing-press, german types &c. purchased of John Burkhardt, belong to Abraham Lincoln; that Theodore Canisius is to have immediate possession of them, and is to commence publishing in Springfield, Illinois, a Republican newspaper, to be chiefly in the german language . . . issuing weekly or oftener . . . the same paper, in political sentiment, not to depart from the Philadelphia and Illinois Republican platforms . . . or to print . . . any thing opposed to, or designed to injure the Republican party." This is all in Lincoln's handwriting. The financial part of the purchase was carried through by Jacob Bunn, a banker of Springfield and a financial backer of Lincoln's presidential campaign. Only a very few of Lincoln's intimate and most trusted friends knew of his ownership of this influential paper. None of the biographers

knew of it until Carl Sandburg found the document in the Hertz collection. The late Senator Albert J. Beveridge, in a letter which accompanies the document, calls it "of first importance".

Another manuscript of especial note is a piece of blotting paper such as comes on a pad, closely written over in pencil by Lincoln. On this he was trying to work out some of the problems which arose from the operation of the draft. A very fine letter is to Gen. Robert Anderson, the hero of Fort Sumter. After his surrender of the fort he became broken in body and mind, and on account of his health he was forced to resign his post in Louisville, Kentucky. Lincoln sent him the following letter:—"Executive Mansion, Washington, August 15, 1863. My dear General Anderson: I have been through the War Department this morning looking up your case. Section 20 of 'An act providing for the better organization of the Military Establishment' Approved August 3, 1861, seems to leave no discretion to President, Secretary of War, General-in-Chief, or any one else. The General-in-Chief, however says that, if agreeable to you, he will give you command of Fort Adams (I think) at New Port, R. I. by which your pay will be the same as if this law did not exist. I advise you to try it, at all events. Gen. Halleck says it will require substantially no labor, or thought, whatever. Please telegraph whether you

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conclude to try it. And now my dear General allow me to assure you that we here are all your sincere friends. Very truly, A. Lincoln."

In the fall of 1926 there were added to the Collection, through the generosity of Mr. Rockefeller and other friends of Brown, 485 letters written by Lincoln but sent by telegraph. Most of them had been published, but they seem to have been known only from the copies of the telegrams as received, and not from the originals which were used at the sending office. This is shown by various small discrepancies between the manuscript and the published form, as might be expected in the case of a telegraph message. These letters, saved apparently by someone in the telegraph office when they were discarded from the files, remained unknown to the collectors who supposed they were leaving no corner unsearched for Lincoln material.

Among the telegrams are many to different generals on war matters; some of a political nature to governors, members of Congress and others; a few to personal friends. Nearly all these were on the nation's business. Occasionally there is one on family matters, such as the one on sending a draft to his son Robert, in college at Harvard, and enquiring for his health; or the note advising Mrs. Lincoln not to come home on the night train as it was too cold. Among them is also found the announcement to the country of the victory at Gettys-

burg. This is signed in full, as also the Thanksgiving Proclamation dated Sept. 3, 1864.

There are two very interesting series of telegrams connected with Gettysburg and Vicksburg. For many months Lincoln had been sending to different officers who might know of Grant's campaign around Vicksburg, asking what news they could give him. Then while the siege still lasted, came the threatened invasion of Pennsylvania and the frantic appeals for help from citizens of that state. Lincoln's telegrams show how he tried to convince them that the plan which was being carried out was best for all concerned. An earlier series was written during McClellan's Peninsular campaign; and others followed relating to the succeeding campaigns of the Army of the Potomac. Still others deal with other armies. One particularly interesting group consists of the pardon or suspension of sentence in the case of many soldiers whom Lincoln did not feel justified in having put to death.

Among these telegrams and other letters and notes in the Collection it was found that there were forty-three that had not been published. These with six others have been issued in a book of seventy-two pages under the title "Lincoln Letters hitherto Unpublished in the Library of Brown University and other Providence Libraries".

The Lincoln medals make another group of great

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interest. The earliest medal in the Collection makes no mention of Lincoln. It was issued in 1860, perhaps before Lincoln was nominated, and reads: "Success to Republican Principles". During this campaign Lincoln is represented as the rail-splitter and Honest Old Abe. On all but one his head is shown without a beard. Several show on the reverse a landscape with the rail-splitter at work. Four years later, at the time of his second campaign, the tone changes. He was no longer the Westerner known only by hearsay, but had won the confidence of the people during a trying period by his conduct of the war. On the 1864 medals we find such inscriptions as: "The People's Choice for President"; "Lincoln and Liberty"; "Lincoln and Union"; "Abraham Lincoln, Freedom, Justice, Truth". Many of the early medals are very crude in workmanship, though some are beautiful. Among the latter is one commemorating emancipation made by the Swiss die-cutter, Hughes Bovy. There is a large group in memory of Lincoln, struck after his assassination. These were often worn on a ribbon as a mourning badge. In this group is found a bronze replica of the gold medal given to Mrs. Lincoln by the French people. From the time of his death to the present Lincoln's head has been used on medals of all kinds. Some were used at conventions or expositions; some were given for prize essays; some are souvenirs of

different cities; some are advertising pieces, put forth by various concerns. In 1909, the one hundredth anniversary of Lincoln's birth, many of all kinds were issued. Among them are found the beautiful Grand Army medal, several by Roiné, and the fine head designed by Victor Brenner, which was accepted for use on the Lincoln penny. Shortly after the Civil War it was proposed to use Lincoln's head on a coin; but it was not done then, as some Congressmen objected because Washington had refused to allow his head to be used. It was principally through the efforts of President Roosevelt that, in the Lincoln centennial year, all objections were overcome, and for the first time the portrait of any person appeared on a coin of the United States.

The Collection is very rich in Lincoln music, both in sheet music form and in broadside song sheets. One of the earliest pieces of sheet music is the "Wigwam Grand March", published by Ditson in 1860. This has a fine portrait of Lincoln without a beard. All kinds of music may be found, ranging from minstrel songs, such as "Abraham's Daughter", to funeral marches and memorial songs, of which there are a great number. The song sheets include some of the same songs, also a number of campaign songs.

Among the broadsides are found, in addition to songs, many contemporary political sheets; a number

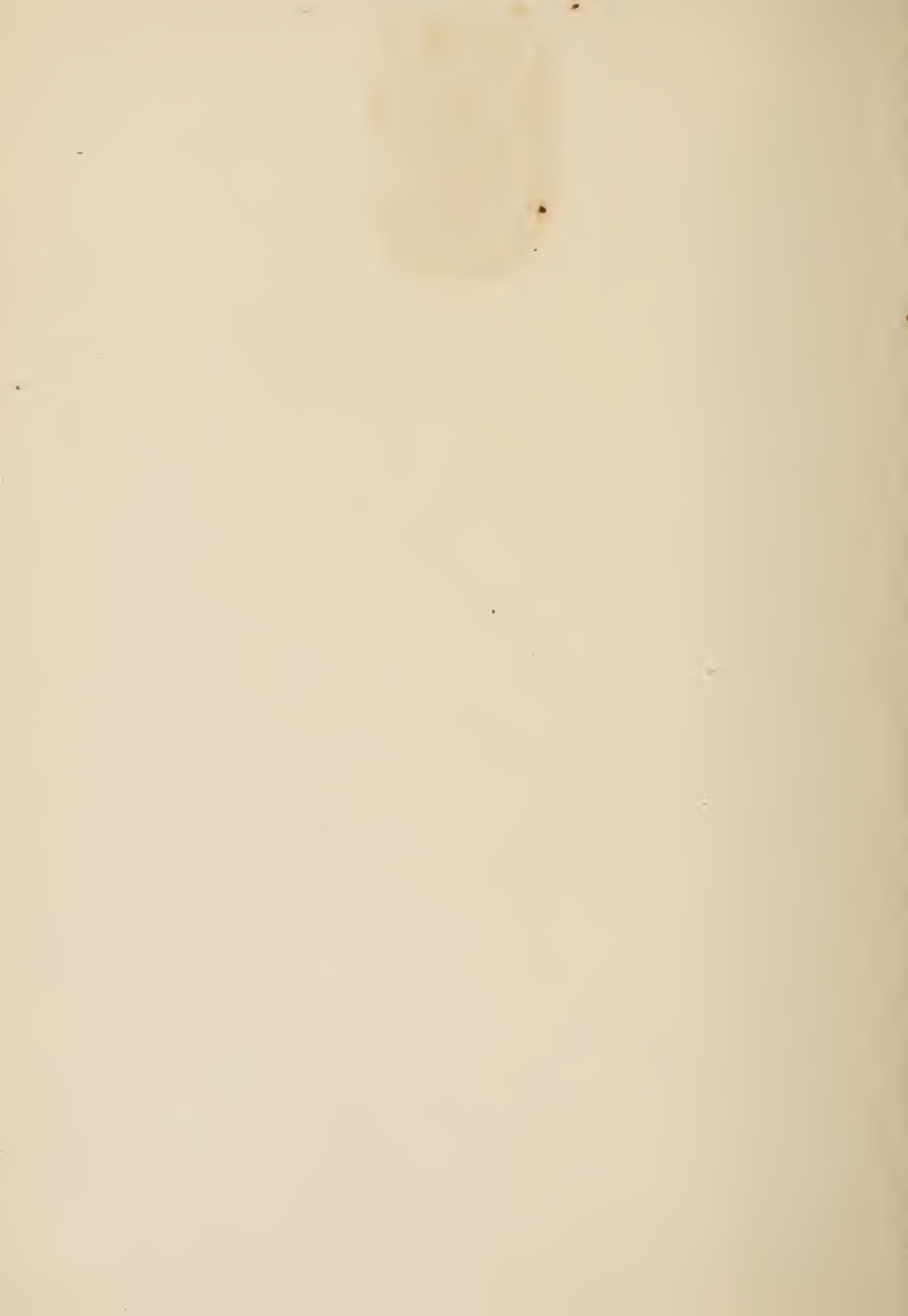
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of ballots, both for Lincoln and for his opponents; also memorial and other poems, some of Lincoln's speeches, various facsimiles, and many other pieces. One of the rarest is the poster issued by the War Department offering \$100,000 reward for the capture of Booth and other conspirators. This has spaces at the top for three portraits, but they were never inserted in this copy. Another rarity is a genuine hand-bill used at Ford's theatre the night Lincoln was shot. Of a different kind is a beautiful etching by Bernhardt Wall, of Lincoln's letter to Saml. Haycraft, May 28, 1860.

The foregoing sketch gives some idea of the scope of the Collection, as well as some hint of the rewards of working in it. It is being kept up to date by the addition of all new material on Lincoln as it appears, and also by the filling of gaps as opportunity offers. It is intended that it shall serve scholars of the North-eastern States so that they need not travel to Washington or Springfield to supply their needs. On the other hand, no thorough student of Lincoln anywhere can afford to neglect the riches to be found in the McLellan Collection at Brown University.

The rooms which contain the Collection are two of a suite of three on the top floor of the John Hay Library building. The third room forms an interesting contrast, as it contains the Hoffman Napoleon Collection. In the Lincoln rooms the cases and furniture are of quartered oak, as in keeping with the character of Lincoln. The third room is panelled in mahogany and furnished in the style of the Empire.

The two Lincoln rooms are lined with cases having grilled bronze doors, and holding the books and pamphlets. On the cases are many small busts and statues, also bronze bas-reliefs, porcelains and other small objects. Opposite the doorway, in the inner room, is a niche containing the Bartlett statue. In this room is also a case for displaying letters, medals and other treasures. On the walls and on some of the bookcase doors are hung fine engravings of Lincoln. A large table and other conveniences are provided those using the Collection.









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